

Hold Your Breath
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Credits roll over a VHS style overlay with glitch/static audio from various different clips of movies and music.

A STRONG DARK musical note begins to rise and credits end with the musical note ending with it.

TITLE: HOLD YOUR BREATH

1 **EXT. - UNKNOWN CITY - NIGHT**

1

After the title card ABRUPTLY ends, multiple shots are shown of the city with its harsh loudness. Cars pass, people walk, and the sky looks moody. Then, one shot HOLDS on an apartment complex window.

CUT TO:

2 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

2

In the chaotic apartment, bottles of alcohol lay on the counter top, with stand-up comedy playing in the background.

The camera slowly pans around the apartment until the camera is on JASON (28); laying on the floor; with a phone and an open bible right next to him.

CAMERA SLOWLY ZOOMS TO JASON'S FACE.

Once Jason's face takes up the entire shot, he's phone RINGS LOUDLY; which awakens him.

He then picks up the phone tirelessly, and a conversation begins.

JASON
Hello?

KATHY
Jason.

JASON (WHILE RUBBING HIS FACE)
Kathy? ... Why'd you call?

KATHY
I needed to check in on you.

SHOT ON JASON LOOKING AT THE HALLWAY, THEN STANDING UP.

Once Jason looks around tiredly, Kathy continues:

KATHY (CONT'D)
I know you haven't slept.

JASON
Well, I... I was.

Jason picks up the remote and pauses the stand up comedy.
The room goes silent.

KATHY
How are you?

CLOSE UP ON JASON.

From an abrupt cut, with Jason on a couch staring at the wall. Then, the room's contrast violently changes and radio feedback noise RISES until...

We're back at Jason on the phone with Kathy.

JASON
(sighs)
Are you real?

KATHY
(laughs)
Yes.

They both pause.

KATHY (CONT'D)
You know, last time I called, it
didn't go so well.

SHOT OF A BROKEN MIRROR IN THE BATHROOM WITH BLOOD IN THE
SINK.

JASON
I know...

KATHY
I never got to ask what I wanted to
ask you.

Jason looks outside the window of the apartment.

JASON
And, what is that?

KATHY
... What exactly caused your
trauma?

ABRUPT CUT to an old man smiling on the beach.

We come back to Kathy continuing:

KATHY (CONT'D)
If you're willing to tell me, I'll
be here.

Jason stares almost sadly, looks around, then...

Shot of JASON's clock on his wall suddenly hitting 12:00AM,
then he confusedly states...

JASON
I thought I'd already told you.

KATHY
I needed more information, Jason.
What happened?

SHOT ON JASON CLOSING HIS EYES.

The scene abruptly cuts to black, holds, then...

CUT TO:

3

EXT. - NORTH MYRTLE BEACH - DAY

3

We see camera shots of the buildings, nature, people, and
life in Conway, South Carolina. It's uniquely beautiful,
peaceful, in its own way. This is complemented with slightly
joyful music.

JASON (V.O.)
When I used to live in South
Carolina... With my dad... We would
always go to the beach. Every
weekend.

SHOT OF WATER SPLASHING AGAINST SOMEONES FEET ON THE BEACH.

We then see abstract underwater shots of sand and underwater
life.

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
He used to tell me...

CUT to Jason and his father FREDERICK.

FREDERICK
The ocean heals. Heals the soul,
the body, even the mental.

We hear seagulls and waves SPLASHING LOUDLY against the shores.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

4

INT. - JASON'S CHILDHOOD - DAY

4

A YOUNG JASON (10) is playing in an overgrown forest.
Sunshine ripping through the trees.

FREDERICK (V.O.)
Things like the forest and the
ocean are nature's tools.
(laughs)

CUT BACK TO THE WAVES OF THE OCEAN.

FREDERICK (V.O.) (CONT'D)
They have a way of washing away
your troubles...

SHOT OF A HOSPITAL ROOM WITH FREDERICK ASLEEP ON THE BED.

JASON (V.O.)
Then, he fell sick. And, I was...
mad.

SHOT OF THE INSIDE OF A CHURCH.

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I was mad at the whole world. I was
angry with god himself.

SHOT OF A BIBLE VERSE. SPECIFICALLY PSALM 23:4:

*"YEA, THOUGH I WALK THROUGH THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW OF
DEATH, I WILL FEAR NO EVIL: FOR THOU ART WITH ME; THY ROD AND
THY STAFF THEY COMFORT ME."*

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
Why would he be taking away my
father's life? And, making me watch
it.

SHOT OF JASON WRITING ON A DESK IN HIS CHILDHOOD ROOM. BOOKS ABOVE HIM AND NEXT TO HIM. WITH A TRASHCAN FULL OF PAPER.

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I was always into writing. I liked
getting my point across paper.
It... It really... comforted me.

BLACK.

JASON (V.O.) (CONT'D)
I was never the same after that
day.

HOLD ON BLACK, THEN...

ABRUPT CUT TO:

5 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY**

5

Jason awakes from his bed, confused, it's impossible to tell if last night was real or not. The same bible from the night before is on the bed. A poster on the wall imagining an ocean, and an unknown pill bottle sits on a table next to the bed.

Jason sits up, gets out of his bed, looks at the pill bottle...

Slightly unsettling music begins...

THE CAMERA FOCUSES ON THE PILL BOTTLE, JASON IS BLURRED IN BACKGROUND.

JASON (UNDER HIS BREATH)
Fuck...

The music rises and continues dramatically.

Jason takes two pills out of the bottle and with a half filled water bottle, swallows them with ease.

He stumbles outside of his room, dodging objects in the hallway.

SHOT OF THE CLOCK STRIKING 1:00PM.

CUT TO:

6 **INT. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

6

The digital clock in the hospital reads 1:01PM.

Frederick is laying on a bed with a nasal cannula. It's a small room.

 YOUNG JASON

Dad? Dad.

Shot of Frederick awaking. In a tired manner...

 FREDERICK

Ye... Yes? What is it?

 YOUNG JASON

You were trying to say something.

 THE SCENE ABRUPTLY ENDS, AND CUTS TO:

7 **INT. - LIBRARY - AFTERNOON**

7

Soft piano music begins.

A shot of a pen-written note on paper reads, *"Don't waste time waiting on something that's going to take a long time."*

The sound of a printer goes off.

SHOT ABOVE PRINTER.

As the printer prints pages, the final page loads out.

A title page of a story, which reads: *"Hold Your Breath"*.

The printer re-adjusts and stops making noise.

CUT BACK TO:

8 **INT. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

8

Frederick is looking at Jason.

 FREDERICK

You know, that... that uh... story
you wrote.

(picks up glasses)

SHOT OF FREDERICK IN BED.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
It's beautiful.
(slight laugh)

Piano music fades out...

Frederick picks up a packet of paper with the title, "*Hold Your Breath*".

YOUNG JASON
(shocked)
How did you get that?

A moment of silence.

FREDERICK
The nurse brought it to me. Saw the
last name on the paper. You must've
left it last time you came.

QUICK SHOT OF "*WRITTEN BY JASON STUART*" ON THE PACKET.

YOUNG JASON
(defeated)
... So you've read it?

FREDERICK
Well... Yes.

YOUNG JASON
...

FREDERICK
You know, I wanted to be a writer
at some point.

FREDERICK (CONT'D)
It's just... the... what was the
point in writing this?

Unexpectedly, the scene ends, and bright and colorful lines and abstract shapes flash, almost beautifully. Music complements the visuals.

Audio is bouncing ear to ear, and everything is SLOWLY becoming MORE and MORE distorted until...

CUT TO:

9 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY**

9

KATHY (30) is now sitting across from Jason in the living room.

They sit in silence.

KATHY

So, what was that story about?

THE CAMERA QUICKLY PANS TO JASON.

CUT TO:

10 **INT. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

10

YOUNG JASON

(shocked)

You're not... mad?

FREDERICK

No. I'm just... I didn't know you
felt this way about me.

THE ROOM FILLS WITH HIGH CONTRAST VIOLENTLY AND A LOUD STATIC
NOISE RISES UNTIL...

CUT TO:

11 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY**

11

The clock on the wall is at 3:30 PM, and the same packet that
Jason wrote is now laying on the table in the middle of him
and Kathy.

KATHY

I really would like to know what
you wrote.

Jason sits in silence. Seconds pass without an answer.

KATHY (CONT'D)

Was it really about-

JASON

(interrupting)

You know what? I'll just fucking
read it to you!

He stands up frustrated, and snatches the packet off the
table, he walks to the window. The same window the camera
zoomed in on from the beginning.

JASON (CONT'D)
 (in a low tone)
 If that's what you want... I'll
 fucking read it. I don't care
 anymore.

He opens the packet to the first page.

JASON (V.O.)
 (aggressive tone)
 This is a story about a son and his
 father.

Slightly dark music begins.

SHOT OF JASON STARING AT THE WORDS ON THE PAPER.

JASON
 (aggressive tone)
 The father was soon to leave his
 own son. Soon to leave the whole
 world along with it.

CUT TO:

12 INT. - HOSPITAL - DAY

12

Frederick is in the bed, continuing the story...

FREDERICK
 (sad tone; reading the
 packet)
 The son wanted his father dead. He
 couldn't stand watching him suffer.

CUT TO:

13 INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY

13

SHOT ON JASON. ALMOST STRUGGLING TO READ THE WORDS.

JASON
 (aggressive tone; reading
 the packet)
 He would rather his own father be
 gone already than to watch him
 slowly die.

SHOT OF KATHY LOOKING SHOCKED.

CUT TO:

14 **INT. - HOSPITAL - DAY**

14

Music increases louder.

CLOSE UP ON FREDERICK.

FREDERICK
(even sadder tone; reading
the packet)
I hated him for that.

CUT TO:

15 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - DAY**

15

JASON
(yelling; reading the
packet)
AND, I COULDN'T STAND WATCHING HIM
DIE IN FRONT OF ME!

BLOOD DROPS are now on the paper. The room is of a HIGHER
CONTRAST. The music is EVEN LOUDER.

JASON (CONT'D)
(yelling)
I WAS JUST A FUCKING KID!

Jason throws the packet across the room. The camera QUICKLY
PANS with the packet.

CUT TO:

16 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

16

Music ends. Jason never threw the packet at a wall...

The mirror in the bathroom is broken. Blood on the packet in
front of him, and in the sink. Jason is trying not to cry
with his blood on his hands.

ABRUPT CUT TO:

17 **INT. - HOSPITAL - AFTERNOON**

17

Soft; quiet music begins. Nothing is heard but the music.

Jason sits outside of a room. Writing something down on a piece of paper. A clock on the wall reads 5:32 PM.

A nurse approaches him. Sits down with him, and says something.

The music changes into a dark tone.

CUT TO:

18 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - NIGHT**

18

Jason walks out of the bathroom, cracking glass as he walks. He slowly walks out of the hallway into the living room. As he holds his bloody hands close to his chest, he realizes that Kathy is nowhere to be found. The clock is at 10:40 AM.

While the dark music is still playing, Jason walks towards the door out of the apartment.

As he walks, pills are spilled on the counter, and paper is everywhere. But no alcohol can be seen. Not a single bottle.

He APPROACHES the door, Looks back at the apartment one final time, and turns the door knob. But, before you can even see what's outside...

DARK MUSIC ENDS, CUT TO:

19 **INT. - JASON'S APARTMENT - MORNING**

19

Jason awakes in his bed. Confused.

He sits up. Looks at his pill bottle.

CAMERA FOCUSES ON BOTTLE.

Jason throws it across the room, and gets out of bed. Slowly, but at a fast pace, he walks down the hallway. The bathroom is untouched, and nothing is broken.

He speed walks to the door, opens it. Runs down the hall until he gets to a staircase. In one whole shot, he runs down the entire staircase in a hurry.

Once he reaches the lobby, he quickly walks to the exit. He bursts through the front doors. Running down the street; passing people; to a beach.

After a while, he is out of breath as he reaches the entrance. He stops running as he could feel the sun shining, and hear seagulls with the waves crashing against the shores.

Jason looks around halfway down the beach on the sand. He spots an old man standing knee deep in the water.

The man turns around, and it is FREDERICK; smiling.

All sound is gone, the waves, the seagulls, they all fade away. Nothing is heard.

Jason walks in the water towards FREDERICK. His father looks at him, happily.

From far away, Frederick reaches out, and they hug, the light reflecting from the ocean blinding the camera until white takes up the whole shot.

THE END.